



# Maryland State Archives DRAFT

## Hall of Records Commission Meeting Minutes

May 8, 2020 2:00 p.m.

Via Teleconference

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### Call to Order by Chair

Attendees:

The Honorable Mary Ellen Barbera, *Chief Judge, Court of Appeals, and Chair of the Hall of Records Commission*

Dr. Richard Bell, *designee of the Chancellor, University System of Maryland*

Ms. Bernadette Benik, *designee of the Treasurer of Maryland*

Mr. Tom Brennan, *designee of the Comptroller of Maryland*

Ms. Catherine Dixon, *designee of the President, St. John's College*

The Honorable William C. "Bill" Ferguson IV, *President of the Senate*

Dr. Ida Jones, *designee of the President, Morgan State University*

The Honorable Nancy K. Kopp, *Treasurer of Maryland*

Mr. Mark B. Letzer, *President and CEO of the Maryland Historical Society*

Ms. Ellen Robertson, *designee of the Secretary of the Department of General Services*

The Honorable Samuel I. "Sandy" Rosenberg, *House of Delegates*

Mr. Jordon Steele, *designee of the President, Johns Hopkins University*

### Opening Remarks / Special Announcements

The Chair welcomed Commission members, designees, Archives' staff, and members of the public.

### Reports & Minutes of Previous Meetings

Hall of Records Commission Meeting Minutes, November 14, 2019:

[https://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/stagsere/se1/se14/000000/000051/hrc\\_minutes\\_fall\\_2019.pdf](https://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/stagsere/se1/se14/000000/000051/hrc_minutes_fall_2019.pdf)

### Special Meetings, Advisory Boards, and Celebratory Events Held

State Archivist Tim Baker reported on the success of the second Forum for representatives of Maryland history and culture organizations at the Rolling Run facility, held on November 18,

2019. The Forum facilitates discussion between these organizations on ways to assist and support each other.

Mr. Baker thanked Dr. Richard Bell for his presentation on *Stolen: Five Free Boys Kidnapped into Slavery and their Astonishing Odyssey Home*, at a Lunch and Learn session at the Archives. He also expressed his regret that a presentation by Dr. Ida Jones on *Baltimore Civil Rights Leader Victorine Q. Adams: The Power of the Ballot* had to be postponed due to the COVID-19 emergency, but anticipates the rescheduling of the talk once the Archives returns to normal operations.

The Chair moved that the minutes be approved and the special meetings of the Commission recognized. The motion was unanimously approved.

### **Records Retention & Disposal**

Mr. Baker reported that, since the last Hall of Records Commission meeting, he approved 30 retention schedules. These consisted of 11 from State agencies, 6 from county agencies, and 13 from municipal agencies.

Mr. Baker also reported the receipt of 203 disposal certificates, 144 of those being submitted digitally and the remaining 59 by paper submission. He noted that he was particularly pleased with the increased number of electronic submissions.

The Chair moved to approve the Records Retention and Disposal Schedules as presented, and the motion was unanimously approved.

### **State Archivist's Report**

#### **Chronology of staff activities since the last meeting:**

Mr. Baker invited the members to review the outreach activities of Archives' staff as being indicative of Archives' goals and priorities.

[https://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/stagsere/se1/se14/000000/000051/hrc\\_chronology\\_spring\\_2020.pdf](https://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/stagsere/se1/se14/000000/000051/hrc_chronology_spring_2020.pdf)

### **COVID-19 Response**

Mr. Baker thanked the Department of General Services for their continued support of the Archives' physical infrastructure during this public health emergency.

Mr. Baker reported that the Archives overcame a myriad of technical and logistical hurdles to convert operations from one in which a small handful of staff teleworked occasionally to an organization in which all employees were contributing to the mission of the Archives remotely in one way or another. He noted that the Archives continues to provide a high level of service to state agencies and the public while working remotely, fulfilling record orders in a timely manner.

Challenges include upgrading the firewalls needed for teleworking staff to securely use Virtual Private Network (VPN).

Mr. Baker announced that on-site public programming was cancelled for the rest of the year, but noted that staff were committed to providing online offerings to the public. As an example, he highlighted the work of Special Collections Department staff in creating and presenting a webinar on *Community Collecting*.

Mr. Baker outlined a phased approach to the transition going forward, emphasizing the safety of staff, visitors, and Archives' collections as being the foremost consideration. An appointment-only reference model would be instituted, with consideration given to patrons needing documents for short-fused requirements. Communication will be important in defining visit protocols and Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) requirements, and in managing expectations in order to avoid conflicts.

The Archives donated the bulk of its PPE stock in support of Anne Arundel Medical Center. Mr. Baker thanked staff member Jennifer Cruickshank for her timely recommendation that the Archives' supply of PPE, including masks, respirators, disposable smocks, shoe covers etc., could best serve frontline responders during this public health emergency. The restocking of PPE will be an important step in the reopening of the Archives to both staff and the public.

The Chair seconded Mr. Baker's emphasis on safety, noting that all Commission members were likely in a similar situation at their own workplaces. She thanked Archives staff for their courage and perseverance, and expressed gratitude that everyone attending was healthy and able to be productive during this difficult time.

## **Volunteers**

Mr. Baker reported that the Archives was unable to support the work of its volunteer cohort during the emergency, necessitating an orderly shutdown of the Register of Wills/FamilySearch organization probate scanning project. Many of the volunteers have returned to their homes in other states, and Mr. Baker noted with regret that it will be difficult to ramp this important project back up again.

## **Audit**

Mr. Baker reported that The Office of Legislative Audits' recent fiscal compliance audit resulted in no findings to report. Mr. Baker thanked Director of Administration Nassir Rezvan for his work in achieving this result.

## **Budget**

Mr. Baker reported that a significant budget reduction target for the next fiscal year has been received and is under review. He stated that his primary goal in addressing this reduction was job preservation.

## **Publications**

Deputy State Archivist Elaine Rice Bachmann reported that an updated edition of *A Guide to the History of Slavery in Maryland* has been published. This new edition comes thirteen years after the initial publication and features fully revised text reflecting the ongoing research of the Study of the Legacy of Slavery in Maryland program staff, with many new photographs and illustrations. Ms. Rice Bachmann thanked Maya Davis and Christopher Haley of the Legacy of Slavery program staff, as well as Emily Oland Squires, for their research and contributions. The Archives is grateful for the support of the Friends of the Maryland State Archives and the Four Rivers Heritage Area for their grants toward the printing of this revised publication.

Ms. Rice Bachmann thanked Mimi Calver for her work on *The Maryland State House: 250 Years of History*, which will be printed and available for distribution by late May or early June. Ten thousand copies will be printed and will be sold in local bookstores, as well as at the Archives itself. Copies will also be distributed to Maryland public libraries.

Ms. Rice Bachmann noted the work being done by Owen Lourie in writing the text for a publication compiled from the biographical research and blog posts of the Finding the Maryland 400 project. She thanked the Friends of the Maryland State Archives and the Sons of the American Revolution for their continuing support of the project.

## **Tubman & Douglass Statues and Joint Legislative Session**

Ms. Rice Bachmann reported on the unveiling of statues of Frederick Douglass and Harriet Tubman at their official dedication at a joint Legislative Session the evening of Monday, February 10th. This event was the culmination of years of planning for the statues, their development and design, as well as the related structural reinforcement required to the floor of the Old House of Delegates Chamber to support the bronze lifesize figures. Ms. Rice Bachmann noted the contributions of Tim Baker, Catherine Rogers Arthur, Christopher Kintzel, Christopher Haley, and Maya Davis of the Archives' staff in bringing this project to its successful conclusion. The joint session was presided over by Senate President William Ferguson and Speaker of the House of Delegates Adrienne Jones. Governor Larry Hogan and First Lady Yumi Hogan, along with Lt. Governor Boyd Rutherford, were also in attendance. Bachmann and Ivan Schwartz of StudioEIS, along with the state's leadership, made remarks. Descendants and relatives of Harriet Tubman and Frederick Douglass were in attendance and were invited by Speaker Jones to join the leadership in opening the doors of the chamber to reveal the sculptures to the public for the first time.

The following Saturday saw a full-day public celebration of the sculptures, featuring speakers, partner institutions, reenactors, and a live musical performance. Members of the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture introduced the speakers who presented in the Governor's Reception Room, which was graciously made accessible for the public event by the office of Governor Hogan. The presiding officers and members of their staff were in attendance as well. Over 1,500 people attended the free public events throughout the day.

Ms. Rice Bachmann thanked the chefs at Government House, the National Park Service Network to Freedom staff, Four Rivers Heritage Area, the United States Naval Academy, the

Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture, and the Commerce Department Division of Tourism for their support of these events.

### **Senate Chamber Portraiture**

Mr. Baker reported that, at the request of Senate President William Ferguson, portraits of Verda Welcome (1904-1990) by Simmie Knox, and Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr. by Lisa Egeli, were installed on the back wall of the Senate Chamber in January. President Ferguson noted his later conversation with President Miller concerning this moving tribute, and thanked Mr. Baker and the Archives' staff for their work.

### **Baltimore City Archives**

Dr. Robert Schoberlein, Acting City Archivist, reported that the Archives closed to the public on March 15th in response to the public health emergency. Dr. Schoberlein and Gerald Roberts, the sole City employee at the facility, are now working remotely.

Dr. Schoberlein also noted that Saul Gibusiwa, Searchroom Coordinator, retired on April 1st. He was highly regarded by staff and volunteers and will be sorely missed. Mr. Roberts is also contemplating retirement this summer and, given the current hiring climate, the timetable for their replacement cannot be determined at present. Student intern Matthew Caruso will continue with the Archives as a volunteer.

Dr. Schoberlein reported on the introduction of a records management bill into Baltimore's City Council. The bill seeks to purge the antiquated and disused portions found within the current City Code, with the last such Code updating occurring in the late 1970s. Mr. Baker expressed the State Archives' strong support for this bill.

Dr. Schoberlein invited Commission members to read his article on a Civil War monument erected in 1866. Entitled "Baltimore's First Civil War Monument: 'An Object Lesson to Posterity of the Loyalty of German-Americans'," it details the circumstances surrounding the erection of the Governor Thomas H. Hicks monument, drawing upon many City Archives resources. It can be found at:

[https://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/stagsere/se1/se14/000000/000051/hrc\\_civil\\_war\\_monument\\_spring\\_2020.pdf](https://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/stagsere/se1/se14/000000/000051/hrc_civil_war_monument_spring_2020.pdf)

Notes for Dr. Schoberlein's report to the Commission can be found at:

[https://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/stagsere/se1/se14/000000/000051/hrc\\_civil\\_war\\_monument\\_spring\\_2020.pdf](https://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/stagsere/se1/se14/000000/000051/hrc_civil_war_monument_spring_2020.pdf)

**Old Business-** No old business

**New Business-** No new business

**Next Meeting-** Upon the call of the Chair.

**Adjournment-** The Chair wished members and participants a safe and healthy summer. The meeting adjourned at 3:05.

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Mr. Timothy D. Baker

State Archivist and Commissioner of Land Patents

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